

12...
OF THE INSTABILITY OF EARTH-
LY MONARCHIES, AND OF THE
NATURE AND STABILITY OF
CHRIST'S KINGDOM:

694. R. 15
12
A

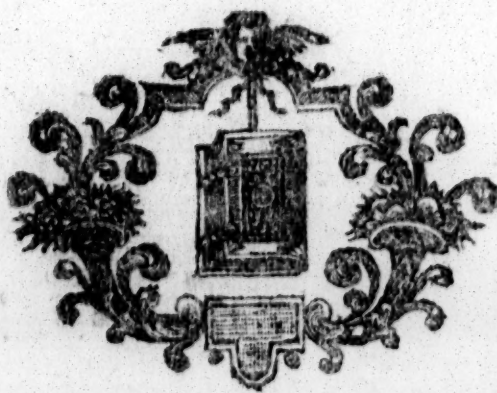
S E R M O N

PREACH'D ON THE

FIFTH OF NOVEMBER,

BY

ABRAHAM TAYLOR.



L O N D O N :

Printed for RICHARD HETT, at the Bible
and Crown in the Poultry, near Cheapfide.

M DCC XXX.

Price 6 d.

12

OF THE INFLUENCE OF EARLY
MORAL INSTRUCTION
ON THE CHARACTER OF THE
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

BY
J. R. M. O. N.

FIRST OF NOVEMBER

AT THE M. M. M. M. M.



LONDON

1844

TO THE REVEREND
MR. THOMAS BRADBURY,

AND THE REVEREND
MR. PETER BRADBURY,

THIS
SERMON

IS WITH ALL RESPECT

DEDICATED BY

Their sincere Friend and Brother,

and Obligated Humble Servant,

ABRAHAM TAYLOR.

TO THE REVEREND

MR THOMAS BRADBURY

AND THE REVEREND

MR PETER BRADBURY

S E R M O N

IS WITH ALL RESPECT

DEDICATED BY

THOMAS BRADBURY

AND PUBLISHED BY

ABRAHAM TAYLOR

DANIEL II. 44.

In the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

WERE there no other argument to convince us, that there is a power supreme, which orders the affairs of this lower world, than the surprizing changes and alterations which are made in states and kingdoms, these alone might satisfy us, that there is a God, who does according to his will, among the inhabitants of the earth, whose hand none can stay, and to whom none has a right to say, what dost thou? This mighty Potentate changes times and seasons, sets up one, and pulls down another; and manifests, that the most powerful monarchs are but as grasshoppers before him. Tho' we may not be able to unravel all the winding mazes of providence, yet if we consider, that the King of kings is infinite in knowledge, we ought to conclude him to have wise designs in view, in all the revolutions he brings about in the kingdoms here below. The oracles of truth assure us, that all these changes are order'd for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, which is universal and everlasting, and for the introducing a more visible display of it on earth. The kingdom of Christ Mediator is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation; and

and tho' the best settled monarchies here must have a period, it will not be so with this King eternal, for he must reign for ever and ever, and all his enemies must be put under his feet.

In this chapter we have an account, how Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had a dream, which greatly disturb'd him, and the more, because he did not distinctly remember it: we are not to suppose that he had entirely and utterly forgot his dream, for then he would not have been so uneasy, and would not have known when it was rightly told him; but it is likely, he had a confused remembrance of some remarkable circumstances in it, which made him the more eager to know the whole, as well as to have it interpreted to him. On this he had recourse to the wise men of Babylon, who perhaps could have framed some interpretation or other, had the king been able to have told his dream distinctly; but seeing he could not do this, the matter was above their reach; and as by this means they increased his perplexity, so he was provoked so far as to order their speedy execution, as cheats and impostors. What these jugglers could not reach, the great revealer of secrets made known to the prophet Daniel, who related it to the king in the following words; "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image; this great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and its form was terrible; this image's head was of fine gold, its breast and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, and its feet partly iron and partly clay; thou sawest 'till a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image upon its feet of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces; then was the iron, the clay,

the brass, the silver and the gold broke to pieces, and they became like the chaff of the summer-threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them, and the stone that struck the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." This the prophet^b interpreted of the four great monarchies, which were to succeed each other, and of the kingdom of Christ, which was to be erected on their ruins. The head of gold denoted the Babylonish, or Assyrian monarchy, which was at that time in its glory; the silver arms and breast were an emblem of the power of the Medes and Persians; the brass belly and thighs represented the Greek or Macedonian kingdom; and the iron legs shadowed out the Roman empire in its strength, as the feet, made up of iron and clay, did the shatter'd condition in which it was for a long time, and the remains of it, which continue to this day: In the days of these kings, before this fourth monarchy is entirely ended, a kingdom is to be set up, which will never fade away; this is the kingdom of Christ, which is represented by a stone cut out without hands, which overturns and breaks in pieces all other dominion; this stone is represented to be at first without art or ornament, because when Christ appear'd he was without form or comeliness, and because for a long season clouds and darkness have been about his throne, his kingdom has not been manifested in its utmost lustre, instead of that he has been persecuted in his members; but the time will come, when he will take his great power and reign, and will subdue all his enemies, and make them crouch before him; this is represented to us in the vision by the stone, after it had crush'd the image in pieces, growing in-

to a great mountain, and over-spreading all the earth.

The same thing which was represented to king Nebuchadnezzar, under the emblem of an image, composed of different sorts of metals, was revealed afterwards to the great prophet, who interpreted this dream, in his^e vision of four beasts; the first of which, a winged lion, shadowed out the Babylonish power, which was then a little upon the decline; the second, which was like a bear, represented the Persian government; the third, a leopard with four heads, denoted Alexander of Macedon, and the four parts which his kingdom was split into upon his death; the fourth, which was an unknown beast, with iron teeth and talons of brass, was an emblem of the Roman power, which subdued all the known world; by the little horn, which sprung up, was meant the papal power; Christ, called one like the Son of man, is there represented as taking the kingdom, and destroying all his enemies. So that the result of both visions is this, that the greatest monarchies here on earth are liable to changes and dissolutions, whereas the kingdom of Christ shall never be dissolved, but shall stand, when it shall only be remember'd, that other kingdoms have been.

I. The strongest and best settled monarchies and governments in the world are subject to great changes, liable to strange revolutions, and often come to a sudden and unexpected end. There is no age but what gives us the most convincing proofs of the truth of this: How often have potentates, who to outward appearance have been sitting firm on their thrones, felt them on a sud-

den totter? and when the crowns of princes have seem'd to sit fast on their heads, how suddenly have they been rent from their brows? many haughty tyrants, who have acted as if each thought all mankind was born to gratify one man's lust, have, without much difficulty, been pull'd from those thrones, which they have endeavour'd to found on blood and cruelty, and been forced to live fugitives and vagabonds on the earth. It would be endless to reckon up the empires and governments, which have been made as it were the sport of providence, by their sudden changes and dissolutions; but it will be sufficient to make a few brief remarks on those great monarchies, the succession of which one to another was emblematically represented in the king of Babylon's dream.

Nebuchadnezzar was a prince of great wisdom, courage and conduct, and as he was ordained by God to be the instrument of his vengeance, to punish many nations which had provoked him, his arms were followed with amazing success, and he greatly increased the Assyrian monarchy; we are assured from the Scripture, that he subdued the kingdoms of Israel, Moab, Ammon, Edom and Egypt, and the commonwealth of Tyre, which was then the great mart of the world: We are told by some ^d ancient writers, that he extended his conquests over the greatest part of Asia and Africa, nay even some part of Europe, as Spain, which is not entirely void of credit, since it is

^d Μεγασθένης — ἀποφάνειν περὶ τοῦτον τὸν βασιλέα τῇ ἀνδρείᾳ καὶ τῷ μεγάλῃ τῇ πράξει· ὑπερβόηκός τε Ἡρακλῆα, καταστρέψασθαι γὰρ αὐτὸν, Φησί, Λιβύης τὴν πολλήν, καὶ Ἰσθρίαν. Joseph. Antiquit. lib. x. c. 11. p. 460. Ed. Oxon. Vol. I. p. 538. Ed. Amstel.

Συναποφάνειν Μεγασθένης — Ναυοκοδόμοισιν, τὸν δὲ Χαλδαῖα εὐδοκίμησαντα, Ἡρακλῆος μύλλον· ὃ εἰς τῆλὸν ἐλάσσει· μέχρι μὲν ἡ διύρη ὃ Τερέκωνα ἀφικέσθαι· ἐκείνον ἢ ἐκ τῆς Ἰσθρίας εἰς τὴν Θράκην, ὃ τὸν Πόντον ἀγαγεῖν τὴν στρατίαν. Strabo lib. xv. p. 686, 687. Ed. Par. p. 1007. Ed. Amstel.

not improbable he over-run all the sea coast of Africa, which was tributary formerly to Egypt, and then the passage into Spain was very short, for one intent on conquest and spoil: But however this is, for certain, by the spoils of the countries which we are sure he subdued, he gained such immense riches, as^e enabled him to carry on at Babylon, the seat of his empire, works which for strength and state were never yet equall'd, and which are so amazing, that the accounts of them will scarce gain credit, with such as do not consider, that any works (tho' ever so great) may be carried on, and soon perfected, where there is neither want of hands nor money. When he came to enjoy peace and rest, his run of conquests, and his immense riches turn'd his head, and he exalted himself against God in an insolent manner, but the true King of kings changed his note, and chequed his pride, sending an odd kind of melancholic distraction upon him, so that he left his palace, and naked, abandon'd, and forlorn, frequented the fields, woods, and other solitary abodes for a considerable time; at last his reason returned to him, and he bless'd the most High, who had in such a terrible manner chastised him; at the same time he returned to the helm of government, and his majesty was so far from being sullied, that, on the contrary, he having learned humility, it shined forth with a greater brightness; then he praised, extolled, and honoured the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and whose ways are righteous, and who is able to abase all that walk in pride; and in an excellent manifesto, made known to all his subjects, the wonders which the most high God had wrought towards him; after

^e Vid. Berosum, apud Joseph. Antiquit. lib. x. c. 11. p. 459.
460. al. Vol. I. p. 535.

^f Dan. iv.

this he had nothing to molest him, but having reigned above forty years, died in full blaze of glory.

The son of this great man was wholly unlike his father, being a^h lazy voluptuous prince, so that he soon lost his crown, and the reins of the government were put into the hands of aⁱ son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, who was a wise and able person, who governed but a few years; and his^k son being soon taken off, the crown was restored to Belshazzar, the grandson of the mighty prince who raised the Babylonish power to such a pitch; this king, by his tyrannical actions, render'd himself very odious to his own subjects, and his neighbours; which encouraged Cyaxares, or Darius king of Media, and Cyrus king of Persia, princes vastly inferior to him in power, to invade him; after a long and successful war, they sat down before Babylon, the inhabitants of which^l despised them; and there was a great deal of reason for them to be lifted up, for their walls were of an amazing height and thickness, being^m three hun-

^h Evilmerodach.

^k Vid. Berosum apud Joseph. c. Apion. lib. I. c. 20. p. 1344. Ed. Oxon. Vol. 2. p. 451. Ed. Amst.

ⁱ Neriglissar or Nergalsarezer. vid. Beros. ibid.

^k Laborosoarchod. vid. Beros. ibid.

^l 'Οι Βαβυλώνιοι—προισάξαντο οὐτίς ἐτέον κέρτα πολλῶν ἐνταῦθα οὗτοι μὲν λόγον ἔχον τὴν πολιορκίαν οὐδέναι. Herodot. lib. I. c. 190.

'Οι δὲ ἐν τῷ τέλει κατεγέλαν τὴν πολιορκίαν, ὡς ἔχοντες τὰ ἐπιτήδεια πλείον ἢ ἔκτισιν ἐταῖν. — Οἱ δ' αὖ Βαβυλώνιοι, ἀκράντες ταῦτα, πολὺ ἔτι μᾶλλον κατεγέλαν. Xenophon Cyropaed. Lib. vii. c. 5. §. 7.

Vol. I. p. 436, 437. Ed. Wells. p. 523. Ed. Hutchinson.

^m Τὰ φρούρα μὲν πρῶτα μὴν βαθεία τε καὶ εὐρία καὶ πλήρ' ὕδατος ὡς οὐκ εἶναι μὲν δὲ πείχος πεντήκοντα μὲν πηγῶν βασιλεῶν ἐν τῷ ἔνδοξοι, ὅσας δὲ διηκοσίων πηγῶν. Herodot. lib. I. c. 178. Babylon Chalcaicarum gentium caput, diu summam claritatem obtinuit, in toto orbe—sexaginta millia passuum amplexa, muris ducenos pedes altis, quinquagenos latis, in singulos pedes ternis digitis mensura ampliore, quam nostra, interfluo Euphrate, mirabili opere utroque. Plinius Hist. Nat. lib. vi. c. 25. p. 356. Ed. Gronov.

dred and fifty foot high, and eighty seven foot thick, besides their being secured with a deep and broad ditch, full of water; the city was sixtyⁿ miles in compass; they had a vast army within their walls, and were stored with provisions for twenty years; so that tho' their enemies lay before the city, they engaged in a luxurious^o festival, in celebrating which the king had the insolence to profane the sacred vessels, which his grandfather had taken out of the temple of the God of hosts; and no question but this was accompanied with blaspheming that Lord of heaven, in whose service they had been employed, who manifested his wrath against this insolence, in causing a hand to appear, and to write upon the wall a declaration of the impious king's doom; tho' the hand was seen, the characters were what none present could read; this greatly frightened the king, and caused him, upon hearing Daniel's character, to send for him: he after a grave reproof of the voluptuous prince, for his insolence, read and interpreted the supernatural inscription, and declared

^a Herodotus gives the following account of the bigness of Babylon, and his account ought to be regarded, because he was there himself whilst the walls stood.

Βαβυλῶν—κτίεται ἐν πεδίῳ μεγάλῳ, μέγας δὲ ἔσται μέτωπον ἑκάστον, εἰκόσι καὶ ἑκατὸν σαδίων, ἑκάστη τετραγώνη· ἕτοι σάδμοι τ' ἀξιόδε τ' πόλιος γίνονται. *Συναπάντες ὀγδόηκοντα καὶ τετρακῆσιοι.* Herodot. lib. I. c. 178.

There are accounts something different in other authors, but all make it very great.

Ἰπολαβοῦσα [*ἢ Σεμίσταμις*] τ' Εὐφράτης ποταμὸν εἰς μέσον, ἀεὶ βάλετο τείχος τῇ πόλει σαδίων τριακοσίων ἑξήκοντα. Diodor. Sic. lib. II. p. 95. Ed. Rhodoman. p. 68. Ed. Steph. — Ἡ δὲ Βαβυλῶν, καὶ αὕτη μὲν ἐστὶν ἐν πεδίῳ, τ' ὃ κύκλον ἔχει τ' τείχεα τριακοσίων ὀγδόηκοντα πέντε σαδίων. Strabo lib. XVI. p. 738. Ed. Par. p. 1072. Ed. Amst. — Totius operis ambitus 368 stadia complectitur. Q. Curtius lib. V. c. I. §. 26. p. 312. Ed. Snakenburg. — Vid. Plin. supra cit.

^o Dan. v.

to him the meaning of it to be, that the period of his kingdom was come, that he was weigh'd in the balances of justice, and found light, and that his dominion was rent from him, and given to the Medes and Persians: Before that very night was over the city was taken, and Cyaxares, or Darius king of Media, with the consent of his son-in-law Cyrus, king of Persia, assumed the government, and so put an end to the Assyrian monarchy.

If such a wonderful revolution had been brought about by a domestick conspiracy, it would not have been so strange; but that in a few hours the empire should come into the hands of a foreigner is exceeding surprizing, and we could give no account of it, had not historians afforded us some light into it; accordingly a judicious author has told us, that Cyrus having besieged Babylon a great while to little purpose, dug trenches, to try if he could turn the water of Euphrates into a great morass, into which it had formerly been turned in order to strengthen its banks, that he might (if possible) render it fordable, and by that means enter the city. When these trenches were ready, Cyrus understanding that the Babylonians were engag'd

Ο ὃς Κύρος, ἐπεὶ δὴ ἰερὴν τοιαύτην ἐν Βαβυλῶνι ἤκεσιν εἶναι, ἐν ἧ' πάντες οἱ Βαβυλωνιοὶ ὅλην τὴν νύκτα πίνουσι καὶ καμῶζουσιν ἐν ταύτῃ, ἐπεὶ δὴ τάχιστα συνεσκότασε, λαβὼν πολλοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἀπεσέμνωσε τὰς τάφρους τὰς πρὸς τὸ ποταμόν. Ὡς ὃ τοῦτο ἐζήνετο, τὸ ὕδωρ κατὰ τὰς τάφρους ἐχώρει ἐν τῇ νυκτί· ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως ἔσποταμοῦ ὁδὸς πορεύσιμος ἀνθρώποις ἐγένετο. Ὡς ὃ τὸ ἔσποταμοῦ οὕτως ἐποσύνετο, παρηγγύησεν ὁ Κύρος Πέρσαις χιλιάρχοις καὶ πεζῶν καὶ ἱππίων, εἰς δύο ἀγόντας τὴν χιλιότην παρῆναι πρὸς αὐτὸν, τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους συμμάχους κατ' οὐρανὸν τούτων ἐπισθαι, ἥπερ πρόσθεν τεταγμένους. Οἱ μὲν δὲ παρήσαν· ὃ δὲ καταδικάσας εἰς τὸ ξηρὸν ἔσποταμοῦ τὰς ὑπερέτας καὶ πεζὰς καὶ ἱππίας, ἐκέλευσε σκέψασθαι εἰ πορεύσιμον εἴη τὸ ἰδιόφωρον ἔσποταμοῦ. Ἐπὶ ὃ ἀπήγγειλαν ὅτι πορεύσιμον εἴη, ἐνταῦθα δὲ συγκαλέσας τοὺς ἡγεμόνας τῶν πεζῶν καὶ τῶν ἱππίων, ἔλεξε τοιαύτη· Ἄνδρες φίλοι, Ὁ μὲν ποταμὸς ἡμῶν παρεκχεράνηκε τῆς εἰς τὴν πόλιν ὁδοῦ.

engag'd in a festival, which they celebrated by drinking and carousing all night, as soon as evening

ἔδοϋ· ἡμῖς δὲ θαρροῦντες εἰσιάμεϋ ἴσω, ἑνομένοισι ὅτι οὗτοι ἐφ' οὓς
 νῦν πορευσόμεθα, ἐκεῖνοί εἰσιν οὓς ἡμεῖς καὶ σύμμαχους πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς
 ἔχοντας, καὶ ἐγρηγορίας ἀπαντας, καὶ νήφοντας, καὶ ἐξωπλισμένους
 καὶ συντιτασμένους ἐνικώμεϋ· νῦν δ' ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἰώμεϋ ἐν ᾧ πολλοὶ μὲν
 αὐτῶν καθύδουσι, πολλοὶ δ' αὐτῶν μνηύουσι, πάντες δὲ ἀσύντακτοί
 εἰσιν· ὅταν δὲ καὶ αἰσθωνταὶ ἡμᾶς ἐνδον ὄντας, πολὺ ἂν ἔτι μᾶλλον ἢ
 νῦν ἀχρεῖοι, ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐκπεπλήχθαι. Εἰ δὲ τις οὗτο ἐννοεῖται, ὃ δὲ λέ-
 γει) φοβερὸν εἶναι τοῖς εἰς πόλιν εἰσιούσι, μὴ ἐπὶ τῇ τέλῃ ἀνάδαντες
 βάλωσιν ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα, τοῦτο μάλιστα θαρρεῖτε. ἢ ᾧ ἀναβῶσι τινες ἐπὶ
 τὰς οἰκίας, ἔχομεν σύμμαχον θεὸν ἡφαιστον. Εὐφλεκτα δὲ τὰ πρὸς θυροῦς
 αὐτῶν, φοινῆς μὲν αἱ θυραὶ πεποιημέναι, ἀσφάλτω δὲ ὑπεκκαύματι
 κεχρισμέναι. Ἡμεῖς δ' αὖ πολλὴν δάδα ἔχομεν, ἣ ταχὺ πολὺ πῦρ
 τέχεται, πολλὴν δὲ πίστιν καὶ εὐπτεῖον, ἃ ταχὺ ᾧ θεῷ καλεῖ πολλὰ
 φλόγα· ὥςτε ἀνάγκη εἶναι ἢ φεύγειν ταχὺ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκιῶν, ἢ ταχὺ
 κατασκευασθαι. Ἀλλ' ἄγετε, λαμβάνετε ὅπλα ἡγήσομαι δὲ ἐγὼ σὺν
 τοῖς θεοῖς. Ἦμεῖς δ' ἔφη, αἱ Γαδάται καὶ Γαβρύα δίκνυτε τὰς ὁδούς·
 ἵπτε γὰρ ὅταν δὲ ἐντὸς ᾠρώμεθα, τὴν ταχίστην ἄγετε ἐπὶ τὴν βασιλείαν.
 Καὶ μὲν, ἔφασαν οἱ ἀμφὶ τὸν Γαβρύαν οὐδὲν ἂν εἴη θάυμαστον, εἰ εἴεν
 ἀκλειεῖσι αἱ πύλαι αἱ τοῦ βασιλείου· ἐν κάμῳ γὰρ δοκεῖ ἢ πόλις πάσα
 εἶναι τῇδε τῇ νυκτί· φυλακὴ μόντοι πρὸς τὴν πυλῶν ἐντετυχόμεθα· ἔσθ
 γὰρ αἰεὶ τεταγμένη. Οὐκ ἂν ἀμελεῖν οἶοι, ἔφη ὁ Κύρῳ, ἀλλ' εἶναι,
 ὥς ἀπαρσένους ὡς μάλιστα λάβωμεν τοὺς ἀνδρας. Ἐπεὶ δὲ ταῦτα
 ἐρρήθη ἱπορεύοντο· τὸ δὲ ἀπαιτάντων οἱ μὲν ἀπίθησκον παλιόμενοι, οἱ δὲ
 ἡφαιστον πάλιν εἴσω, οἱ δ' ἔβαν. Οἱ δ' ἀμφὶ τὸν Γαβρύαν συνεβάν
 αὐτοῖς, ὡς καμαστοὶ ὄντες καὶ αὐτοὶ· καὶ ἰόντες ἢ ἰδόντες ὡς ταχίστην
 ἐπὶ τοῖς βασιλείοις ἰγόντο. Καὶ οἱ μὲν σὺν τῷ Γαβρύᾳ καὶ Γαδάτῳ
 τεταγμένοι κεκλεισμένας εὐρίσκουσι τὰς πύλας τοῦ βασιλείου· οἱ δ' ἐπὶ
 τὰς φύλακας ταχύντες ἐπεισπίπουσιν αὐτοῖς πῆουσι πρὸς Φῶς πολὺν,
 καὶ ἐνθὺς ὡς πολέμιοι ἰχρῶντο αὐτοῖς. Ὡς δὲ κραυγὴ καὶ κτύπος ἐγγί-
 νητο, αἰσθόμενοι οἱ ἐνδον τοῦ θάρβου, κελεύσαντο τοῦ βασιλέως ἐκ-
 ψασθαι τὴν εἰς τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἐκθέουσι τινες ἀνοίξαντες τὰς πύλας. Οἱ
 δ' ἀμφὶ τὸν Γαδάταν ὡς εἶδον τὰς πύλας χαλῶσας, εἰσπίπουσιν, καὶ
 τοῖς πάλιν φεύγουσιν ἴσω ἐφεκόμενοι καὶ παλιόντες ἀφικνοῦνται πρὸς
 τὸν βασιλέα· καὶ ἡδὴ ἐσηκότα αὐτὸν καὶ ἐσπασμένον ὃν εἶχεν ἀκινά-
 κῳ εὐρίσκουσι. Καὶ τοῦτοι μὲν οἱ σὺν Γαδάτῳ καὶ Γαβρύᾳ πολλοὶ
 ἐχyroῦντο. Καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ δὲ ἀπίθησκον, ὃ μὲν προβαλλόμενός τι, ὃ
 δὲ φεύγων, ὃ δὲ γε, καὶ ἀμυνόμενος ὅτῳ ἔδνατο. Ὁ δὲ Κύρῳ
 διέπειτε τὰς τῶν ἱππῶν τάξεις κατὰ τὰς ὁδούς· καὶ προεῖπεν, οὓς μὲν
 ἔξω λαμβάνοιεν κατακτείναν, τοὺς δ' ἐν ταῖς οἰκίαις κηρύττειν τοὺς Συ-
 ριστὰς ἐπισταμένους ἐνδον μένειν· εἰ δὲ τις ἔξω ληφθεὶς ὅτι θανατώσεται. —
 Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡμέρα ἐγένετο καὶ ἦσαν οἱ τὰς ἀκρας ἔχοντες ἐαλωκυῖαν τε
 τὴν πόλιν, καὶ βασιλεὺς τιθηκότες, ᾧ θεῷ δάσιν καὶ τὰς ἀκρας. Xe-
 nophon Cyropaed. lib. vii. c. 5. §. 7—12. Vol. I. p. 437—441.
 Ed. Wells. p. 524—530. Ed. Hutchinson.

approached,

approach'd, he broke down the heads of the trenches next the river, and when he was inform'd the stream was sunk, he encouraged his men to enter the city, whilst in all likelihood the inhabitants were drunk, and in case they should take the alarm, to fire the houses, bravely promising to lead them on himself; entering the city, they made a terrible slaughter, killing or putting to flight all they met. In the mean time some noble persons, whom the king by insufferable injuries had forced to desert from him, hasten'd with a body of troops to the palace, and finding the gates shut, they fell on the out-guards; this occasion'd so great a noise, that the king order'd the gates to be open'd, to know the cause of it; on this, they rushed in with great fury, and seeing the king with his sword drawn, they kill'd him, and made great slaughter of his attendants; on this, the garrisons of the forts threw down their arms, and the whole city was taken.

Another historian, something older, tho' he does not often agree with the before mention'd writer, yet in the account he gives of Cyrus's taking Babylon, he has not differ'd from him, but his relation is considerably shorter, and he has not told so many particulars as the former. His narrative of this wonderful catastrophe is to the following purpose: ¶ Cyrus finding the siege of Babylon go
on

¶ Κύρου δ' ἀπολείπει ἐνείχεται, ὅτε χρόνῳ τε ἐγγνωμένῳ (ὡς) ἀνωτέρω
ἢ ἔδεν τ' πρηγμαύτων προκοπιμῶν. "Εἴτε δὲ ἂν ἄλλος οἱ ἀπαρῶντες
ἰσχυρήκατο, εἴτε καὶ αὐτὸς ἔμαθε τὸ ποιητέον οἱ ἦν, ἐποίησε δὲ τοιοῦτον
πέρας τὴν στρατὸν ἀπάσαν ἐξ ἐμβολῆς τῷ ποταμῷ, τῇ ἐς τὴν πόλιν
ἐσθ' ἀλλή, καὶ ὅπου αὐτὸς τὴν πόλιν πέρας ἐποίησε, τῇ ἐξείκει ἐκ τῆς πό-
λις ὁ ποταμὸς ὥστε τῷ στρατῷ, ὅταν ἀφ' ἐκείνου τὸ ρέον ἐ-
λθόνται ἡρόμερον, εἰσελθόντα ταύτῃ ἐς τὴν πόλιν. ἔτσι τε ἢ πέρας καὶ κατὰ
ταῦτα ὡς ἐγένετο, ἀπὸ λαυνο αὐτὸς σὺν τῷ ἀρχηγῷ τῷ στρατῷ, ἀπικα-
μένῳ ἢ ἐπὶ τὴν λίμνην πέριξ ἢ τῶν Βαβυλωνίων βασιλείᾳ [Νίτω-
κρῆς] ἐποίησε κατὰ τε τὸν ποταμὸν καὶ κατὰ τὴν λίμνην, ἐποίησε καὶ ὁ
Κύρος

on slowly, broke down the dam which had been raised, to keep the river Euphrates from running into the great morafs, and dug new trenches, to facilitate the turning the stream of the river; having by this means render'd it fordable for foot, his men enter'd the city by surprize, the inhabitants being all intent on a festival; and when one part of the city was taken, those who dwelt in other parts of it, by reason of its prodigious largeness, did not for a considerable time know any thing of the matter.

These relations, as they are a noble and ample comment upon the account given by Daniel, so they contain little but what was predicted by the prophet [†]Jeremiah, in the letter which he sent to the captives in Babylon, by his friend Seraiah: He foretold, that in the Babylonians heat God would make feasts, and make them drunk, their princes, wise men, captains, rulers, and mighty men, in order to their rejoicing and sleeping a perpetual sleep so as not to awake; that a drought should be upon their waters, the passages should be stop'd, and the

ΚῦρⓄ ἕτερα τοιαῦτα. τὸν γὰρ πόταμον διαρυχὶ εἰσαγαγὼν εἰς τὴν λίανην ἰοῦσαν ἑλθⓄ, τὸ ὄρεχαιὸν ῥέεθρον ἀλφειὰν εἶναι ἐποίησε, ὑπονεοσθέντⓄ ὁ ποταμοῦ χυρμῶς ἢ τῆς τοιαύτης, οἱ Πέρσαι οἱ περ ἐτεπύχατο ἐπ' αὐτῷ τούτῳ κατὰ τὸ ῥέεθρον ὁ Εὐφράτεω ποταμοῦ, ὑπονεοσθέντⓄ αἰνδοὶ ὡς ἐς μέσον μηρὸν μάλιστ' αὖ κατὰ τὸ ἐσθῆσαν εἰς τὴν Βαβυλῶνα. εἰ μὲν ὅν προεπύθοντο ἢ ἔμαθον οἱ Βαβυλωνίαι τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Κῦρος ποιεῦμενον, εἴδ' ἂν ἀπεκιδόντες τοὺς Πέρσας ἐσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν πόλιν, διέφθεραν κάκιστα. κατακληίσαντες γὰρ ἂν πάσας τὰς εἰς τὸν πόταμον πυλίδας ἐχούσας, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπὶ τὰς ἀίμασσις ἀναβάντες τὰς ὡρὰς τὰ χεῖλα τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐληλαμῆδας, ἔλαβον ἀνσφας ὡς ἐν κύρτῃ· νῦν δὲ εἰς ἀπροσδοκίαν σφί παρέστησαν οἱ Πέρσαι, ὑπὸ δὲ μεγάλῃ τῆς πόλεως, ὡς λέγεται ὑπὸ τῶν ταύτῃ αἰκημένων, τῶν περὶ τὰ ἑχάτα τῆς πόλεως ἐκλωγῆτων, τοὺς τὸ μέσον οἰκόντας τῶν Βαβυλωνίων, οὐ μανδάνειν ἐκλωγῆτας, ἀλλὰ (τυχεῖν γὰρ σφί εἶδον ὀρετὴν) χαρεῖν τοῦ τούτου τὸν χρόνον, καὶ ἐν εὐπαθείῃ εἶναι, ἐς δὲ δὴ καὶ τὸ κάρτα ἐπύθοντο· καὶ Βαβυλὼν μὲν οὕτω τότε πρῶτον ἀνάρητο. Herodotus lib. i. c. 190, 191. p. 76, 77. Ed. Gronov.

[†] Jer. li. 39, 57. l. 38. li. 31, 32, 36.

reeds

reeds be burnt with fire; that their sea and springs should be dried up, and that one post should hurry after another, to acquaint the king of Babylon that the city was taken at one end.

Thus, to fulfil ^s Isaiah's prophecies, Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, and the beauty of the Chaldees excellence, whilst she was saying, I shall be a lady for ever, I shall not sit a widow, neither shall I know the want of children, in a moment, in one day found widowhood and the loss of children come upon her, in their perfection; for when God stirred up the Medes and Persians against her, evil came upon her she knew not from whence, mischief fell upon her which she was not able to put off, and desolation overtook her suddenly, which she did not expect; every one found in her was thrust thro', and all who appear'd for her fell by the sword; her enemies bows dash'd her young men to pieces, their eyes spared not, but they cut off from her name and remnant, son and nephew; the country round her was made a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: In short, the Lord of hosts swept her with the besom of destruction, and suffer'd her to be no longer call'd the lady of the kingdoms, or the queen of nations.

The Persian monarchy, which was erected on the ruins of that of Assyria, exceeded it in extent of dominion, but was inferior to it, as Daniel ^r prophesied it should be, in glory and riches. Indeed when that great and excellent prince ^u Cyrus was at the head of it, it every way equalled, if not exceeded what was before, and his son, tho' next

^f Isa. xiii. 19, 20. xlvii. 7, 8, 9. xlii. 17. xlvii. 11. xlii. 25, 18. xix. 22, 23. xlvii. 5. ^r Dan. ii. 39.

^u Xenophon Cyropaed. lib. viii. c. 3. § 1—10. cap. 6. § 10, 11. Vol. I. p. 491—499, 538, 559. Ed. Wells. p. 589—598, 644, 645. Ed. Hutchinson.

to mad, did not lessen the empire, but ^w added Egypt to it. Darius, tho' a brave and a wise prince, exhausted his treasures by two ill-concerted and needless expeditions, ^x one into Scythia, and ^y another into Greece. The Persian empire received a greater blow by the rash and frantic expedition of ^z Xerxes, his successor, into Greece. His son Artaxerxes, the Ahasuerus in the book of Esther, warned by these examples, wisely sat down contented with what he already possess'd, as did his successors mostly; and tho' there were sometimes civil convulsions in the kingdom, yet the last king, Darius Codomannus, had vast treasures, and numerous armies, and nothing considerable had been dismembred from the empire, from the time of its founder Cyrus.

When matters were thus with this opulent kingdom, it was an amazing turn of providence, that it should on a sudden be overturn'd by Alexander; this, as well as the fall of Babylon, is a proof of the power and sovereignty of the most High, in pulling down kingdoms at his pleasure. Nothing is more surprizing than the expedition of the aforesaid prince into Persia; that a rash youth, at the head of a handful of men, should subdue so potent a kingdom, is astonishing. He having ^a defeated the Persians in three battles, all
oppo-

^w Vid. Herodot. lib. ii. c. 1—33. p. 159—172. Ed. Gronov.

^x Vid. Herodot. lib. iv. c. 83—98. p. 249—253. c. 120—144. 29—267.

^y Vid. Herodot. lib. vi. c. 31—117. p. 341—370.

^z Vid. Herodot. Lib. vii, viii, ix. Diodor. Sic. Lib. xi. Vol. II. p. 1—16, 22—29. Ed. Rhodom. p. 242—252, 257—261. Edit. Steph. Plutarch. in Themistocle, p. 113, 122. Ed. Francf. in Aristide, p. 323—332.

^a The first was at passing the Granicus: (Vid. Diodor. Sic. lib. xvii. Vol. II. p. 501, 502. Ed. Hanov. p. 571, 572. Ed. Steph. Plutarch Alexandro, p. 672, 673. Arrian. lib. I. p. 37—48. Ed. Blancard. c. 14—17. p. 29—36. Ed. Gronov.

opposition fell before him; he added Greece, Asia the less, and the Indies to the Persian empire; the swiftness of his conquests was represented to the prophet ^b Daniel in a vision, by a he-goat so quick in his motion, that he touched not the ground. He soon destroyed himself by his intemperance, and his dominions were divided into four ^c mighty kingdoms; some of these were soon destroyed, and others lasted a long time; yet at length they were all swallowed up by the prevailing power of the Romans, who subdued all the parts of the known world.

This mighty empire had a very small beginning, and its prodigious increase shews what wonderful things may be done by a people, where a publick spirit prevails, and where liberty has its seat: The Romans, during the time of the commonwealth, advanced ^d their arms over the whole world that was then known; and tho' sometimes they met with strenuous opposition, yet no nation, tho'

nov. Justin. lib. xi. c. 6.) The second battle was at the streights of Issus. (Vid. Diodor. Sic. lib. xvii. p. 512—515. al. p. 579, 580. Q. Curtius, lib. iii. c. 8—13. p. 103—151. Edit. Snakenburg. Plutarch. p. 675, 676, 677. Arrian, lib. ii. p. 94—116. al. c. 7—12. p. 68—82. Justin. lib. xi. c. 11.) The third and the decisive battle was at a village called Gaugmela, a few miles off Arbela. (Vid. Diodor. lib. xvii. p. 532—536. al. 592, 593, 594. Q. Curt. lib. iv. c. 12—16. p. 256—298. Plutarch. p. 681—685. Arrian. lib. iii. p. 171—195. al. c. 8—15. p. 114—126. Justin. lib. xi. c. 13.) in this last battle Darius had eleven hundred thousand men, and Alexander not more than fifty thousand.

^b Dan. viii. 5.

^c Cassander had Macedon and Greece; Lyfander's share was Thrace, and those parts of Asia next the streights; Ptolemy possessed himself of Egypt, Libya, Arabia, Palestine, and Cœlesyria; and Seleucus obtain'd Syria, Armenia, Chaldea, Media and Persia.

^d Chiefly by the means of the Scipio's, Flaminius, Aemilius, the Metellus's, Marius, Sylla, Lucullus, Pompey, and Julius Cæsar.

ever so powerful, could stand it out against their prevailing power. When their liberty was overthrown, and their government was turned into a monarchy by Julius Cæsar^e and Augustus, there were no new conquests to speak of made, only in some parts which had been subdued, the inhabitants which were rude and uncivilized, were much polished; as for instance, our country, of a wood inhabited by savages, was in a few years made as wealthy and populous a province, as any in the empire. However, the monarchy continued in its glory above four hundred years; for it was at a very high pitch under Theodosius the great, and tho' it was sometimes torn by civil divisions, and its lustre eclipsed by worthless tyrants, yet there were not wanting ^f brave princes to retrieve its losses; and when great part of it had been for a long time over-run by barbarous

* Julius Cæsar was not the first which invaded the Roman liberty; it was first destroy'd by Sylla, who usurp'd the Dictatorship, and was a more absolute prince than any of the Emperors; yet he on a sudden laid down his power, when he was in his full glory. He had kept up the form of creating Consuls, and when on the day of election he was chose to be one, he declined the honour, and appointed others, and then to the surprize of all gave up the supreme power, and offered to answer for what he had done, to any who would call him to account; and sending off his guards, walked about a while as a private person, and then went home to his house, and soon retired into the country, where having amused himself for some time with rural pleasures, he died in his quiet retreat, and was sumptuously interr'd, at the publick charge. (Vid. Appian. de bellis civil. lib. 1. p. 415—418. Ed. Steph. p. 690—695. Ed. Tollii.) There hardly could be a more remarkable sight, than to see the Lord of the greatest part of the world in a moment, without any other reason than his own inclination, reduce himself to the rank of a private person.

^f Such as Trajan, the two Antonines, Sulpicius Severus, Alexander Severus, Claudius, Aurelian, Probus, Constantine and Theodosius.

nations,

nations, it was almost ² restored to its ancient extent. It cannot be said ever to have been totally rooted out, for the name, and some remains of it continue to this day: And as all attempts to set up a fifth monarchy have been unsuccessful, we have reason from Scripture to conclude, that before this kingdom is entirely ended, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, and that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose diadem will never be torn away, and whose scepter will never be broke.

II. When all the empires of this world are in a tottering condition, the kingdom of Christ will endure for ever.

Christ, as God, is invested naturally with a dominion over all things in the creation; he spoke, and they were made, and he commanded and they stood fast; he also orders all things, and ^h "by him all things consist." As he is the former of all things, whether in heaven or on earth, all things must be under his dominion, whether they are the mighty potentates, and glorious princes of the heavenly world, or whether they are the inferior tribes of flesh and blood. This kingly power is essential to Christ, as he is the God over all; but besides this, he has a mediatorial kingdom, which is the reward of his sufferings: He is the sole King in his church, and of the world; his people, whom he makes willing in the day of his power, he governs by a scepter of mercy, but his obdurate foes he will rule with a rod of iron, and if they foolishly

² Under Justinian, in which wise prince, and his brave generals Belisarius and Narses, the Roman greatness had its period.

^h Col. i. 17.

stand it out against him to the last, he will dash them to pieces as potters vessels.

1. Christ could not manage his mediatorial kingdom, were he not God as well as man; tho' his right to the mediatorial kingdom comes by purchase, yet he could not order the concerns of it, had he not infinite perfectionsⁱ. As he is Lord of all, he must be present in all parts of his dominion, and must be always with his people, even to the^k end of the world; but this can never be supposed of him, if he is not immense. Asthro' him all our requests must be offer'd up to the Father, he must hear all the prayers of such as come to God thro' him, and consequently must know all things; he only will present the prayers of faith, perfumed with the sweet incense of his merits, and never will present those requests, which hypocrites offer up with feigned lips; if so, he must be the searcher of hearts, and must know the thoughts, which is a thing out of the compass of any but a divine person. He must be invested with almighty power, for the carrying on his work on his own children; more than a created power is requisite, to give them light when they sit in darkness, to subdue them when they are filled with obstinacy and rebellion, to raise them out of the grave of corruption, and to infuse into them life, when they are dead in trespasses and sins: Divine power is necessary to preserve them from falling, to enable them to hold on their way, to assist them in resisting all the opposition they meet with from sin, Satan, and the world, and to bring them at last to the realms of joy and peace: Christ must be likewise almighty, to overcome his and our enemies;

ⁱ See more on this subject in my true Scripture doctrine of the Trinity, part. II. c. 10. p 400—408. ^k Matt. xxviii. 20.

he must have strength infinitely superior to that of the most mighty creature, for his carrying on a continued victory over all the powers of darkness, that vainly band against him, for his obtaining this continual conquest without the least difficulty, and for his over-ruling all their malice, and often making it, contrary to their intentions, subservient to his glory, and the good of his people; and likewise for his causing the wrath of men to praise him, and restraining their fury, when it is not subservient to his wise designs.

It must be own'd, that God is able to invest a creature with strength sufficient to oppose and overcome all that rise up in rebellion against their Maker; but if we suppose the strength of this creature limited, tho' he might obtain the conquest, yet it would be with difficulty, and those against whom he is engaged would struggle with him, and oppose him. Now Christ carries on all his designs in an irresistible manner, which argues him to be almighty, and were he not so, he could not manage the affairs of his mediatorial kingdom. If this be true, as it really is, nothing is more frivolous than the pretence of the disputers of this world, that the doctrine of Christ's supreme divinity is a mere speculative point, or a matter of no importance to Christians; as the design of this is, to lull such as love Christ asleep, that those who grieve to see his glory, may, with less disturbance, go on in their vain opposition to it, so it wounds a believer's peace; for what can be more puzzling to him, than to be left at uncertainties, whether he, into whose hands he has committed all his affairs, is able to perfect what concerns him, or not?

2. Tho' Christ is fitted to manage the affairs of his mediatorial kingdom, as he is God, yet it is what the Father, according to the oeconomy
agreed

agreed upon between the divine Persons, raised him to, as the reward of his sufferings. On his resurrection he was declared to¹ be the Son of God with power; this the sweet^m Psalmist of Israel has represented to us, or rather the Holy Spirit, the God and the rock of Israel, whose word was on his tongue. "Jehovah said to me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession; thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The same thing is largely declared to us by the apostle Paulⁿ, in the following words: "Christ being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, nevertheless he emptied himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; for which cause God has highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Christ^o being the Son of God, was naturally and necessarily equal with God, yet for the sake of the fallen posterity of Adam, he descended into this lower world, in the fullness of time; and the manner of his making this merciful visit was wonderful; he did not come in the pomp of his divinity, or outwardly armed with

¹ Rom. i. 4.^m Psalm ii. 7, 8, 9.ⁿ Philip. ii. 6-11.

^o See Dr. Waterland's sermons on Christ's Divinity, p. 168, 169, 174-178; and my True Script. Doct. of the Trinity, p. 195-199.

the terrors of omnipotence, but he veil'd his awful glories, and shrouded his godlike majesty in a tabernacle of flesh; he did not lose his essential glory, but conceal'd it, appearing as a mean and miserable man, and under that poor appearance groan'd, bled, and died on the cross: As he was under no necessity to have done this, but did it out of his free-love, and good-will to men, it pleased God the Father, after the Son had vanquished Death and hell, in the most solemn manner to proclaim his dignity, and to require angels and men, all within the verge of the creation, to confess him to be Lord and God, to stoop to his righteous scepter, and to bow down at the footstool of his throne, on pain of being broke by the thunder of his power, and of being for ever the unhappy marks of his almighty vengeance.

We are expressly told by the apostle ^PPaul, that one end of Christ's sufferings and exaltation was, that he might be universal Lord; his words are these, "For this end Christ died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living." He submitted not to death, that he might lie under the power of it; and he made not the grave his abode, that he might ever continue in its gloom; neither did he ascend into heaven, that he might only enjoy ease for himself, but he exposed himself to the stroke of the king of terrors, and went down into the dark caverns of the earth, that by rising from the dead, he might swallow up death in victory, and might burst the strong barriers of the grave; and the end of his doing this was, that he might ascend into heaven, and take all affairs into his hand, as Lord of the dead and the living, that he might

^P Rom. xiv. 9.

preside as King in his church, and that he might bring all those sheep into his fold, which were given him by his Father, who brought him, the great shepherd of the sheep, from the dead, thro' the blood of the everlasting covenant.

Christ, while he continued in the world, lived a life of infamy and reproach; and tho' he went about doing acts of kindness, yet he met with little but scorn and ingratitude, and was treated by a base and worthless people, as if he had been the vilest of men; and when he came to end his doleful days, it was by a death shameful and painful; the torments of his body, and the agonies of his mind were inexpressible, and the ignominy he suffered was exceeding great. As he endured all this for sins not his own, it was but just and reasonable, that he should lift up his head out of the grave with honour and dignity, and should be raised far above all principalities and powers; that angels, and archangels, and all the host of heaven should with pleasure adore him, on the account of his having, by the strength of his divine nature, perfected the redemption of men, to bring about which he suffered in the flesh; and that the infernal lords should be forced to crouch before him, and be filled with dismay at the terror of his frown.

3. Christ's government is supreme, spiritual, and universal.

Christ is the supreme King in his church; he has no equal, neither will he suffer any competitor, but will, notwithstanding the usurpations of men, maintain his absolute power, without a rival. The title of King of kings is a title which he has often taken to himself, in Scripture; and when he is described in the Revelation of John, going forth against his enemies, dressed in warlike pomp, this is the name which is wrote up-
on

on ^a his thigh, and his imperial robe, King of kings and Lord of lords. As in the work of death none stood by him, or assisted him, but his own strength wrought salvation for him, and his own power upheld him, so he alone will wear the glory of his kingdom, and the government must be laid on no shoulder but his, who only is able to bear the weight of it, as he is the mighty God, and the Prince of peace. As he is King in Sion, it is his right to prescribe to his people the rules of worship, and consequently no man has a right to make that necessary which he has not prescribed; indeed men wise in their own conceits, as the bigots of the church of Rome, may obtrude upon their fellow creatures a yoke of pompous ceremonies, under pretence of order and decency; but he surely is the best judge of order and decency, therefore this pretence will not excuse such imposers from the charge of encroaching on his royal prerogative, and usurping his empire over the conscience. As all imposers come under this charge, so the same indictment may justly be found against the advocates for a false liberty, or rather real licentiousness, who are for making those things to be unnecessary, which he has declared to be necessary; and under the pretence of enlarging the bounds of Christ's kingdom, are for robbing Christians of the sacred treasure of their most holy faith, and taking them off from all regard to the great and mysterious doctrines of the glorious gospel. These under a hypocritical pretence of advancing Christ's kingdom, reduce our holy religion to a sort of refined paganism, and as they wound Christ under a treacherous pretence of friendship, so all their fine words concerning his kingly power, and against others

^a Rev. xix. 16.

R 1

D 2

imposing,

imposing, serve only to put us in mind of their predecessor Judas, who cried, hail master, when he was come to betray his Lord into the hand of his enemies.

There have often appear'd in the world men, who seem to have a glowing zeal for the supremacy of Christ, and not to be able, with patience, to bear with human impositions; but what these deceivers call impositions and human inventions, are the great and important doctrines of the gospel. The sacred inclosures which these wild boars of the forest are for rooting up, have really been placed by Christ about his vineyard; and it will be found that the Son of man, whom God has made strong for himself, will preserve his fences against all their vain attempts, and will in the end cloath them with shame, tho' they may make eager attempts, and may have the power and policy of hell engaged on their side. They who make that unnecessary, which Christ has made necessary, are as impudent invaders of his prerogative, as the most rigorous imposers of their own inventions; and unless they are ashamed of their folly, before it is too late to grow wiser, they will find that the same curse will fall upon the daring miscreants, who presume to take from the book of life, as will overtake the arrogant creatures, who venture to add to it.

The kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom, and as it is such, it is not of this world. Hence he himself * said; "My kingdom is not of this world." It is by the truth of his word, and the power of his spirit that he rules and governs; by the power of his spirit he can confound seducers, and can pour the oil of gladness into the hearts of the inhabitants of Sion. The weapons

by which he carries on all his miraculous conquests are spiritual; to this purpose said the apostle¹ Paul, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty, thro' God, for the casting down strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:" the weapons whereby Christ casts down the strong forts and citadels of the devil's kingdom, are not carnal but spiritual; we may then judge whose kingdom they set up, who propagate their opinions by fire and faggot, racks and wheels, axes and halters. These are not weapons taken out of the armoury of Christ, but from the devil's magazine; and as those who with pleasure use such furniture, for the carrying on what they call the cause of religion, shew themselves to have hearts of flint, and bowels of brass, so they manifest, that they are utter strangers to that wisdom which is peaceable and gentle, and entirely unacquainted with the nature of Christ's kingdom. No person has a liberty to insult, libel, and blaspheme the religion of our Saviour, who is protected from wrong by a Christian magistracy; for in so doing he renders himself unworthy of protection; but it does not belong to the magistrate to propagate the Christian religion by the sword; this is to be spread by the methods used by our blessed Lord, and the first preachers of Christianity, who traced his glorious steps, and that is by sound reasoning, gentle persuasion, earnest entreaties, and warm denunciations of the spiritual judgments which will follow a final rejection of it: Whereas the hangman's ax and halter have no force to work upon the understanding, the

¹ 1 Cor. x. 4. 5.

fear of them may make men hypocritically profess what they do not believe, but it will never persuade them of the truth of Christianity.

Christ's kingdom; as it is supreme; so it is universal; all persons; and all things must be either willingly subject to him, or must be forced to bow before him. Hence he is in Scripture stiled Lord of all, and Lord over all^c. The powers of light, the glorious angels who have kept their stations, own him for their confirming head, and with the greatest cheerfulness prostrate themselves before his throne, engaging in his service with the utmost delight; and the princes of darkness, though it is with regret, are forced to submit to him; his people, whom he makes willing in the day of his power, out of choice submit to his sway, and his enemies will sooner or later feel the weight of his arm, unless they throw down the weapons of their foolish and rebellious warfare at his feet. The potentates of the earth are sometimes apt, vainly to imagine themselves able to break his bands, and are so sanguine, as to try to cast his cords from them; but the exalted Saviour, who sits in the heavens, laughs at their impotent malice, and has in the utmost contempt their pride and folly: Such sinners against their own souls had much better hearken to the following good ^a advice of a mighty and a potent prince, who reckoned it his greatest glory to be subject to the Messiah, who (after the flesh) was to spring from him: "Be wise, you kings, be instructed you judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling; worship the Son, lest he be angry, and when his wrath is kindled but a little, you perish from the way: blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

^c Acts x. 36. Rom. x. 12.

^a Psalm ii. 10, 11, 12.

Most miserable will they be, who continue to the last, enemies to the King of Sion; one frown of his angry face will send them into those seats of woe where rest never enters, and hope never comes: On the contrary, blessed and happy are all who put their trust in this mighty potentate, for he will employ his power, to support them under all the difficulties of life, and to place them at last safe in the happy mansions of rest, joy, and peace.

4. Christ gave a great display of his kingly power in the first propagation of the gospel, and its spreading over the world. When he chose apostles and disciples, to propagate his holy doctrines, he fixed not on such as were reckoned the wise men of this world, but on those who, to an eye of mere reason, might have seemed the unfittest persons he could have pitched upon. He committed the preaching of the gospel not to those learned in the Jewish law and rites, but to a few poor fishermen of Galilee, who appear for the most part to have been men of mean capacities, and very low attainments in knowledge, as well as of timorous spirits; nay none of the apostles, that we know of, had a learned education, except Paul, who was a compleat proficient in all Jewish and Greek literature; yet when Christ had poured forth the Spirit upon them, these once unlearned, ignorant, and timorous fishermen became sons of thunder, to throw down all that stood in their way, and by their undaunted behaviour, and manly irresistible eloquence, silenced or baffled all gainsayers, confounded kings, and in defiance of earthly power and force, which was all engaged against them, spread the knowledge of their risen Redeemer from sea to sea; and without the fear of deaths many, and deaths terrible, with which they were encompassed, preach'd
Christ

Christ crucified, filling the world with the knowledge of him, who tho' he appeared in the form of a servant, was the God over all blessed for ever. The first sermon that * was preached after the Saviour of the world ascended, gained three thousand converts, and it was preached by one who had given sufficient discovery of his very great weakness, before he was endued with power from on high: Before this, Peter's courage * could not face a poor maid, but after this he could face † the Jewish council with the courage of a lion, and boldly tell them to their faces, that he would not regard the charge they gave him, not to preach Christ, so that they were struck with astonishment at his holy boldness. As all the disciples did, was by the power of their exalted Master, so his subduing to himself great part of the world, by such instruments as they were, shew'd that he was the supreme Lord of all, who had the hearts of all men in his hand, and could turn them like rivers of water.

5. Christ has all along shewed his kingly power, in gathering in his people, in preserving his church under persecutions, and continually raising up witnesses for his truth.

Christ translates his elect from the power of darkness into his own kingdom of light: He overcomes their stubborn and resisting disposition, rooting out the enmity of their carnal minds, and taking away the hardness which is naturally in their hearts; he enlarges them when they are in the greatest bondage, bringing them out of the prison of sin and unbelief; and he causes them to submit to his rule, creating in them a willingness to come under the yoke of his government, when naturally they are unruly, and impatient of all

* Acts ii. 41.

* Mark xiv. 66—69.

† Acts iv. 13, 18,

19, 20.

restraint. Christ rules by his Spirit, and guides by his word those whom he converts, and when they come under the governing influence of his kingly power, they separate from the common course of the world, and give themselves up to him, that by his aid and help they may shew forth the virtues and praises of him, who calls them to honour and immortality. Christ conquers all that are enemies to him, as Mediator, and to the grand design of his mediation, which is the salvation of sinners; all his peoples enemies must sink under his power, that his grace may be exalted in their salvation: He conquers sin, that it cannot bring eternal death on believers, and that it cannot reign over them, to keep them in bondage, for as a king he destroys its enslaving power: He subdues Satan, crushes him under his feet, and disarms him of his destroying power; if he suffers the devil to tempt his people, it is to try them, not that he may prevail over them; and if he permits him to disturb them, by injecting evil thoughts, he does not leave them without sufficient strength, to disapprove, if not at once to repel, all the evil thoughts which the author of evil suggests to them. The last enemy which is to be vanquished for Christians is death; this enemy is subdued by Christ, for he has in his keeping the keys of death and the grave, he has deprived death of his sting, and has strip'd the grave of all its horrors, so that believers can meet the king of terrors, as their best friend, by whom their souls are conveyed into the presence of their glorified Head, and can commit their bodies to the grave, as a bed of rest, in hopes of a joyful resurrection.

The church has frequently undergone very severe and dreadful persecutions, but they have been so far from crushing it, that it has come out of

E

the

the furnace with greater beauty, and Christ, the great King of it, has often shewed the glory of his power, in taking a severe revenge on persecutors. It may not be amiss to give a few instances of this. Herod² raised a severe persecution against the church, murdered the apostle James, and endeavoured to do the same by Peter, only God sent an angel to prevent him; but he soon met his doom, for when he was dressed in his robes of state, and was pleased with the impious flattery of a servile rabble, complimenting him with divinity, an angel struck him with some severe disease, so that he was eat up by worms. Nero was a barbarous and brutish tyrant, and in sport^a set fire to the city of Rome, and afterwards cast the odium^b of it upon the Christians, great numbers

^a Acts xii. See also Josephus, (Antiquit. lib. xix. c. 8. p. 872. Ed. Oxon. Vol. I. p. 950, 951. Ed. Amst.) who owns that he was pleased with the flattery, and was suddenly struck with an uncommon disease, which drew from him these affecting words, "See here I, whom you call your God, am forced to depart out of this life, that my dissolution may confute your lying flattery, and I whom you call immortal, see how I am drag'd to death."

^b Vid. Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. c. 38—44. Vol. I. p. 654—661. Ed. Gronov. Sueton. in Neron. cap. 38. p. 543, 544. Ed. Graev. p. 808, 811. Ed. Pitisc. Dion. Cass. lib. lxii. p. 708, 709. Edit. Leunclav.

^c Non decebat infamia quin jussu incendium crederetur; ergo abolendo rumori Nero subdidit reos, & quaesitissimis poenis affecit, quos — vulgus Christianos appellabat. — pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contesti, laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammandi, atque ubi defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur. Tacitus ubi sup. p. 662, 663.

Opinio omnium invidiam incendii in principem retorquebat credebaturque Imperator gloriam renovandae urbis quaesisse; neque ulla re Nero efficiebat quin ab eo jussu incendium putaretur. Igitur vertit invidiam in Christianos, actaeque in innoxios crudelissimae quaestiones, quin & novae mortes excogitatae, ut ferarum tergis contesti laniatu canum interirent; multi

bers of whom he put to death with exquisite tortures, causing many to be dressed up in pitchy cloaths, and so to be set on fire in the streets; but this monster did not escape a righteous vengeance, for having made himself intolerable to all, he was by the senate deposed, and ^c sentenced to be whipt to death; to avoid which ignominious and painful punishment, after he had in vain beg'd the favour of his followers to dispatch him, at last with much ado he made a shift, by the help of one of them, to destroy himself. Domitian, as he imitated the former in most other things, so he took care to copy after him in his cruelty to the Christians, but he was soon cut off; for having murdered ^d his cousin and brother-in-law Flavius Clement, on suspicion of his having embraced Christianity, some of his dependents, who were not inclined to the principles he was suspected of, entered into a conspiracy against the tyrant, and in revenge of their patron's murder stab'd him. After the Christian religion had gain'd great ground, Decius, a bigoted Pagan, took it into his head, that he was the person who was to suppress it, and began his reign with a ^e dreadful persecution; but he was not permitted to go on long, for in an expedition into Scythia, he was either ^f killed,

multi crucibus affixi, aut flamma usti: Plerique in id reservati, ut cum defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur. Sulpitius Severus lib. ii. c. 41. p. 390, 391. Edit. Hornii.

^c Vid. Sueton. in Neron. c. 47, 48. p. 553—556. al. 825—831. Dion. Cass. lib. lxiii. p. 726, 727.

^d Vid. Sueton. in Domitian. c. 15—18. p. 689—692. al. 1045—1051. Dion. Cass. lib. lxvii. p. 766, 767, 768. Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. lib. viii. c. 25. p. 365, 366. Edit. Lips.

^e Vid. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. vi. c. 39—42. p. 190—198. Edit. Vales.

^f Vid. Constantin. Orat. ad Sanct. cap. xxiv. p. 495, 496. Ed. Vales. vel Lactant. de mort. Persecut. cap. iv. Euseb. Chron. Gr. A. D. 252.

and so became a prey to vultures, or was swallowed up with his horse in a bog, his body never being found. The most dreadful persecution of ^hall was raised by Dioclesian, Maximian, and Galerius, which lasted many years, and many thousands suffered, and that with such terrible tortures, that a man must have a heart of flint, who can read over the accounts we have remaining of it without horror: All these tyrants felt the judgment of him whom they persecuted in his members. Dioclesian ⁱsurrender'd the empire, partly thro' melancholy, because he found he could not extirpate Christianity, and chiefly because of the threats of Galerius: when he had done this very ^kunwillingly, he retired, and lived many years privately, where, as it is likely, thro' the horrors of a guilty conscience, ^lhe grew frenzied, and was harrassed with a continual fear of being consumed by lightning, and having been long compassed with terrors on every side, at last he either ^mbroke his heart, or starved himself for grief, that Christianity was like to be established, and that little respect was paid to him. Maximian, who was forced to resign with him, after he had in vain endeavoured more than once to reinstate himself, being found guilty of a ⁿconspira-

^g Vid. Ammian. Marcell. lib. xxxi. c. 13. p. 497. Edit. Gron. Zosim. lib. i. p. 22, 23. Ed. Oxon. Zonar. Annal. lib. xii. c. 20. Vol. I. p. 627. Ed. Reg. Par. Cedren. Compend. Hist. p. 212.

^h Vid. Euseb. lib. viii. cap. 5—17. & de Martyr. Palaest. p. 242—282.

ⁱ Vid. Lactant. de mortibus Persec. c. 17, 18, 19. Zonar. lib. xii. c. 32. Vol. I. p. 642.

^k It is certain he did not give up his power willingly, from the following words of Lactantius; Lachrymabundus, fiat, inquit, si placet.

^l This we are told by no less a person than the emperor Constantine, who certainly best knew. (Vid. Orat. ad Sanct. c. 25. p. 496. ^m Lactant. de mort. persec. c. 42.

ⁿ Idem, ibid. c. 26, 29, 30.

cy against the life of Constantine, was sentenced to die, and chose ignominiously to end his days by the halter. Galerius, who forced these to resign, and had been their chief prompter to persecution, making ^o them believe the Christians intended to burn them in their palace, carried on the persecution with great fury, but was at last made a fearful example of vengeance, being seiz'd with a dreadful disease, whereby his flesh rotted away, and was consumed by worms. He owned this was a judgment for his cruelty to the Christians, and in his extremity ^a published an edict in their favour. Julian, one of the most spiteful enemies Christ ever had, took care, at his death, loudly to proclaim from whom he had received the fatal stroke, for ^r taking a handful of his blood, he, in rage and fury, threw it up into the air, crying out, At last, Galilean, you have overcome. To these may be added some persecutors of the vile Arian faction. Valens the emperor persecuted the Catholics severely, punishing many with death, and in his ^s cruelties copied after the Pagan oppressors, but he came to a deplorable end, for having been ^t defeated by the Goths, he took shelter

^o Idem, *ibid.* c. 14, 15.

^r Idem, *ibid.* c. 33, 35. Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* lib. viii. c. 16, 17. p. 257.

^a This may be seen in Eusebius, lib. viii. c. 17. p. 257. and Lactantius, c. 34.

^r *Ἐκείνους δὲ γε φασὶ διδάμνουν τὴν πλὴν, ἐκδοὺς πλῆσαι τὴν χεῖρος αἵματι, καὶ τὸτο ρίψαι εἰς τὸ αἶμα καὶ φάναι, Νενίκηκα, Γαλιλαῖς· καὶ κατὰ ταῦτό τὴν τε νικὴν ὁμολογῆσαι, καὶ τὴν βλασφημίαν τελέμῃσαι· ὅπως ἐμφορόντη· ἦν.* Theodorit. *Hist. Eccles.* lib. iii. c. 20. p. 147. Ed. Par. Vid. & Sozomen. *Hist. Eccles.* lib. ii. c. 2. p. 419.

^t Vid. Gregor. Nazian. *Orat.* xx. Vol. I. p. 348. Ed. Par. *Orat.* xxv. p. 432, 433, 434. *Orat.* xxxii. p. 512. Socrat. lib. iv. c. 16. p. 186. Ed. Par. Sozomen, lib. vi. c. 14. p. 533.

^s Vid. Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xxxi. c. 13. p. 497, 498. Ed. Gronov. Socrat. lib. iv. c. 38. p. 209. Sozomen. lib. vi. c. 40.

shelter in a mean cottage, in which he was burnt, his enemies not knowing who was in it. Huneric, the Vandal king in Africa, was a bigoted, tho' very ignorant Arian, and persecuted those of a contrary mind in a dreadful manner, treating them with all manner of barbarities; but he was soon cut off* by an uncommon illness, his body putrifying, and vermin breeding in him, which made him a sad spectacle to all about him. It would be endless to enumerate all the instances of Christ's taking vengeance on persecutors; the examples which have been given shew, that he has not forbore to manifest his power over those, who have insolently set themselves against his interest.

Christ continually raises up such as may stand up for his cause; even when he suffered the long night of Popish darkness to overspread the world, he at all times raised up witnesses for the truth, and none in the whole world was more eminent than our great countryman Wickliff; he with an unparallel'd boldness preached against the usurpations of the Pope, and with a great deal of wit and good sense, as well as keenness and just satyr, inveigh'd against the abominable corruptions of the church of Rome; this occasioned him to live a harrassed life, but after he had weather'd all storms, he came at last to his grave in peace: His doctrines were not confined at home, but spread into Germany, and many of his followers, both here and abroad, seal'd the truth with their blood.

c. 40. p. 571, 572. Theodorit. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. 36. p. 195. Philostorg. lib. ix. c. 17. p. 521. Edit. Par. Zosim. lib. iv. p. 230, 231. Zonar. lib. xiii. c. 16. p. 31, 32. Ed. Par. Reg. Cedrenus Compend. p. 258. Ed. Bas.

* Vid. Viſtor. Vitenſ. de perſecutione Vandalica, lib. iii, iv, v. Ruinart. de eadsm. Par. ii. c. 7, 8.

* Vid. Viſtor. Vitenſ. lib. v. c. 21. p. 93. Edit. Ruinart. Viſtor. Tununenſ. p. 4. Edit. Scal. Iſidor. Chron. A. D. 501.

At last it pleased the King of saints to have respect to the sighing of the prisoners, and to raise up instruments to promote a reformation. He put it into the heart of Zuinglius in Switzerland, and about a year after stir'd up Luther in Germany, to oppose the papal usurpations, with a zeal and courage that shewed they were under a divine influence. They were but obscure monastics, and it might have been thought, they were no more likely to do any mighty matters, than those who had gone before them, whom the Papists had crush'd; but Christ's time was come for many to be called out of Babylon, and he being with them, they could neither be terrified, nor baffled by their Antichristian enemies. The great work which was by them begun, was carried on by others, among whom, notwithstanding the contempt which is cast upon them, none shine with greater brightness, than those two polite and learned, as well as honest and zealous divines, Calvin and Beza. By the labours of the many worthy confessors which Christ raised up, to own, and not conceal his truth, the reformation was spread over many parts of Europe, with a celerity that shewed the work was of God. It must be with sorrow confess'd, that the work of Reformation has been at a stand, or going backward, for more than the last hundred years; the glory is much departed from the reformed churches, and their beauty is greatly tarnished; but Christ is able to revive his work, and he certainly will do it in his own time.

6. There will be a far more glorious administration of Christ's mediatorial kingdom, than ever has been in the world. Some doting enthusiasts have fancied, that Christ will personally reign on earth, and will abolish all civil government; but they forget that the heavens must receive him,
'till

'till the consummation of all things, and that his kingdom is not of this world. Leaving such to their own dreams and delusions, it must ^{*}beaver'd, that there will be a much more glorious state of the church, than ever has been yet; when the Jews are converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, and when the eastern and western Antichrists are destroyed. The church of Christ never found a state suitable to the promises and predictions, which are in the Scriptures about it, and therefore some great thing remains to be accomplished, which the world never yet saw, and which the churches never yet experienced. There is need of great caution when we speak of this matter, and as we should be very much afraid of going without Scripture light, in our accounts of it; so we should not vain-gloriously arrogate to ourselves the spirit of prophecy, to tell when this glorious epocha will commence.

Tho' civil government will not be destroyed, yet there will be a visible subjection of all the kingdoms and nations of the world to Christ. The Father ^y has promised to give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; and the church is called upon in the following ^z manner, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee; the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." There has been little of this nature seen yet in the world, therefore the full accomplishment is yet to be expected. The church is represented in the ¹ Revelation as triumphing, in a high strain, at

^{*} See Mr. R. Taylor's Discourse on the Gospel, as it is the power of God, in his Works, Vol. IV. p. 342—360.

^y Psalm. ii. 8.

^z Isa. lx. 1, 3.

¹ Rev. xi. 15—18. That this passage is not to be understood of the last judgment, is shewed by the late learned Mr. Vitringa, in his comment. p. 510, &c.

the commencement of this happy period: "The seventh Angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever; and the twenty four elders, which sat on seats before God, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come, for thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned; and the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them that destroy'd the earth." If this did not refer to the commencement of a stupendous period of time, wherein there will be a great enlargement of Christ's mediatorial kingdom, there would be no reason for such loud acclamations of joy, as a time of Jubilee draws forth. There will a time come, when the potentates of the earth will not be confederated against Christ, as for the most part they now are, but will bow to his sceptre, and acknowledge his authority; then the powers that are angry at him shall feel his wrath, and all who corrupt the earth shall be destroyed; then the blood of the righteous dead, which was shed for an adherence to his cause, shall be avenged, and the ^b souls of the prophets, and other witnesses for him, shall no longer cry for vengeance under the altar, but shall in full blessedness ^c rejoice over the enemies of their Lord; nay, the happiness of heaven shall be, as it were, heighten'd to them, by their knowing, that the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, that he is called upon from East to West, that all

^b Rev. vi. 9, 10.

^c Rev. xviii. 20.

his enemies are forced to lick the dust, and that his name is great over all the world.

The churches shall enjoy great peace, when Christ shall take his great power and reign; this is represented to us by the^d evangelical prophet, under the following most beautiful allegory: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lye down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling shall be together, and a little child shall lead them; and the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the sucking child shall play about the hole of the asp, and the child new-wean'd shall put his hand into the cockatrice's den; they shall neither hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the sea." When this prophecy comes to be accomplished, there shall be great peace in the church, and the utmost security to the sincere worshipers of the King, who will reign in righteousness: Those who for fierceness have been like ravening wolves, like bears rob'd of their whelps, like mountain leopards, or lions of the forest, and as full of venom and malignity as asps, or^e basilisks, shall lay aside their brutal savageness, and shed all their poison, and shall put on a quiet, meek, and loving disposition towards those whom they formerly persecuted, and with them shall lie down in the green pastures of the Gospel, where salvation grows; and being enlighten'd with the knowledge of Christ, shall submit to be fed by him, and guided by him as a shepherd, who will lead them to quiet springs, that their thirst may be quenched; even such as are not made wise to salvation, shall be restrained,

^d Isa. xi. 6—9. See Mr. Vitrings's commentary, Vol. I. p 328—339.

^e Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. p. 11. lib. ix. c. 9.

and shall not go about to hurt and destroy. When this happy day dawns, the following pompous language may be used^f of the church of Christ, "Look to Sion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of its stakes shall be removed, neither shall any of its cords be broke, but there the glorious Lord will be a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall any gallant ship pass thereby." In this glorious period will be fulfilled the following promise; "I will make thy officers peace, and thy exactors righteousness; violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders, but thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise; the sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light to thee, for the Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."

The future prosperous state of the church will be accompanied with great purity and holiness; outward peace is only a cessation of arms, to let the devil work his will, when either truth is lost, or the practice of strict godliness is neglected. It must be owned, that the prosperity of the church has as yet brought a cloud on her real glory, and she has surfeited on the fullness of her bread, when she should have been nourished by her plenty; but there will be a time, when her prosperity will be as much improved for true holiness, as it has been hertofore abused, for the encouragement of carelessness and licentiousness; things will not always be at the pass they are at present, but as the^h prophets have foretold, "The people shall be all righteous; a little one shall be as a thousand, and a small one as a strong nation; he that is feeble, in that day shall be as David, and the

^f Is. xxxiii. 20, 21. ^g Is. lx. 17, 18, 19. ^h Is. lx. 21, 22. Zech. xii. 8

house of David as God, as the angel of the Lord's presence." Such as have been of little consideration, shall be as eminent as many who have made the greatest figure, and such as have been of small use, shall be as a mighty nation; such as are feeble shall be as David, strong in grace, and full of heavenly courage and resolution; and such as are strong shall be as God, even as the angel of God's presence; for they shall bear a near resemblance to Christ in holiness, who is himself God, and the angel of the Father's presence, to go before them, to guide and lead them. When this day comes, Christians, tho' not perfect, will be so holy, that they will maintain an uniformity in their conduct, and will keep up the same distance from sin, in their civil actions, as the best do now, in the most sacred duties of religion, according to these words of the prophetⁱ Zechariah; "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, holiness to the Lord of hosts, and the pots in the Lord's house shall be as the bowls before the altar; every pot in Jerusalem, and in Judah, shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts; and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord." Holiness to the Lord was the inscription engraved on the Levitical high-priest's diadem, which he wore, when he enter'd the holiest of all; when the dwellers in Sion have this legible upon them, in their civil actions, as well as their sacred services, their purity will be great; and at the same time that they have the power of the King of glory to protect them from danger, and to give them outward prosperity, they will have great holiness to beautify and adorn them.

In these happy days there will be a mighty presence of God in the ordinances of his house, and great light shall shine in the church. The

ⁱ Zech. xiv. 21, 22.

power of the Spirit of Christ will be in ordinances, to convert sinners, and build up believers, as it was in the morning of Christianity; then there was the vernal bloom of what will be the ripe harvest of the glory of Christ's mediatorial kingdom: The mighty power of the Holy Spirit will work, in and by the ordinances of the Gospel, as it did in the time of the Apostles, and then the profiting of such as sit under them will appear to all men. The light of truth will then shine in the church, like the sun in the heavens, and all the errors which have (in different ages) shewed their loathsome heads with boldness, shall have no place but in the infernal regions, where they were first hatched. Therefore when errors prevail, and times grow dark, they who are zealous for the Lord of hosts, should encourage themselves with the prospect of greater light breaking forth in the church. This God has promised by the prophet Isaiah in the following elegant passage, addressed to the church in adversity, "O thou afflicted, tossed with a tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones of fair colours, and thy foundation with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy bulwarks of pleasant stones: And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." This allegorical description is expressive of the great knowledge, steadiness, zeal and sincerity which will be the glory of Christians, in the later days, when they shall not lean to their understandings, or give way to the artifices of fleshly wisdom, but shall be all taught of God. Then ¹ the knowledge of the Lord shall overspread the earth, as the waters fill the sea, and the churches sun shall no more go down, neither shall

* Isa. liv. 11, 12, 13. See Mr. Vittinga's Commentary, Vol. 2. p. 694, 698.

¹ Isa. xi. 9. lx. 20.

her moon withdraw itself, for Christ Jesus, the Lord Jehovah, will be her everlasting light, and her days of darkness and mourning shall be ended: when the glory of the later days springs forth, the church shall have a clear heaven over her head, and shall see the feet of Christ as it were in this clear heaven, or find him always ready, to bless his ordinances, which are her provision, and satisfy her poor with bread, to endue her ministers with righteousness, and make her saints shout for joy, and to cloath her enemies with shame, and pour down peace upon her helpers.

7. The present dispensation of Christ's kingdom will be terminated at the last day, or at the final judgment. When Christ comes in glory, as there will be no need of proofs of his true Deity, so^m it is his divine nature, which will make him capable to judge the world, at the same time that he in his human nature shall appear. As he is almighty in power, he can raise the dead, and unite the shatter'd parts, which length of time has separated; as he is infinite in knowledge, he can take cognizance of the actions of men; as he is perfect in justice, he can award a righteous doom; as his strength is irresistable, he can inflict the sentence he pronounces; and as he is supreme in authority, no appeal can be made from his tribunal: When he is thus compleatly furnished with abilities to go thro' the work of judgment, as he is God, heⁿ will appear on a throne of glory, as he is man. The manner of his second appearance will be vastly different from his first; then he came meek and lowly, riding on an ass, but hereafter he shall make the clouds his chariot,

^m See my true Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 417—421.

ⁿ It can't be expected, I can here treat largely on the subject of the last judgment, therefore I refer the reader to others, especially to Mr. Hurrion's four excellent Sermons on this subject, in his discourses on Christ glorified, p. 299—435.

and shall come on the wings of the wind; formerly he suffered vile and contemptible foes to have their will of him for a time, but when he comes again, the most insolent of his enemies will be struck with dread.

When the King of glory comes to be admired by his saints, and adored by all who believe, his manhood will no more be in the likeness of sinful flesh, but will shine with a brightness vastly superior to the sun, and the awful glories of his Godhead will be unveiled. He will descend in power and great glory, in his Father's glory and his own, with ten thousands of his holy angels attending him, array'd in their brightest robes of light and immortality: He will come in flaming fire, with thunder clouding his brow, with the sword of justice arming his hand, and with a triumphal diadem circling his head; his face shall be as lightening, his eyes as flames of fire, and his voice louder than the noise of waves dashing against the shore; from his presence the heavens and earth shall fly away; the rocks will rend, the deserts will quake, the hills will totter, and the mountains reel; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood; the heavens will pass away with a great noise, the elements will melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and all therein, will be burnt with fire; the Archangel, a creature of the highest rank, will be pleased with the honour conferr'd upon him, of sounding the trumpet before his great Lord, to awake the sleeping dead, and to summon them to present themselves before the Judge of all.

When our blessed Lord has appeared in this august manner, and has taken his seat on the throne of judgment, he will proceed to the great work of passing a righteous sentence: The moral law will be his rule of judgment, and all who have transgressed it, and have not his righteousness to plead

plead for themselves, will have a just punishment inflicted on them: Those who have washed their robes, and made them white in his blood, shall congratulant approach him, and welcome him to his judgment seat; they shall be owned and acquitted by him, and shall be revived with these kind words, Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, before the foundation of the world; Then their spotless breasts will be ravished with holy joy; and going into the inheritance which is incorruptible, they will with crowns of triumph on their heads, and palms of victory in their hands, join with angels, and arch-angels, and all the host of heaven, in crying out, Jesus, the Lord God omnipotent, reigns, and in ascribing salvation, honour, power, and glory to the King of saints, who redeem'd them by his own blood. Thus happy will be Christ's friends, but alas! how miserable will his enemies be; they, with shuddering horror, must appear before him; tho' they will be angry to see his glory, yet they will be convinced it will be fruitless and vain to attempt to oppose him; for when once anger lightens in his displeased face, all created strength will wither: Reprobate mortals will, with rueful shrieks, cry out to the rocks to hide them, and to the mountains to cover them; but all in vain, for they must be stun'd with those dreadful sounds, Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, and from the bar they must be drag'd to execution. The fiends infernal will then have fullness of torment inflicted on them, and will be forced to howl for ever, on a lake of fire and brimstone, under the weight of the righteous vengeance of him, who first threw them from heaven.

8. Tho' at the day of judgment the present administration of Christ's kingdom will cease, yet he will continue King for ever. Some have thought Christ's kingdom will not be eternal, from the following

following words of the apostle Paul^o, "Then comes the end, when he shall have deliver'd the kingdom to God the Father, and shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power: — and when all things shall be subdued to him, then shall the Son himself be subject to him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all." But ^p this place can never conclude against Christ's reigning as Mediator, in any sense, King to eternity, because the Scripture has^q fully declared, that his kingdom is everlasting. The sense is, that Christ's kingdom will cease, as to the form of its administration, which is by the word and sacraments, by the cross, afflictions, and conflicts with enemies. In the administration of this kingdom, Christ employs under him angels and men, but when his enemies are all conquer'd, and when the ministry of men and angels is finish'd, Christ will deliver up his kingdom, by presenting all those committed to his charge before God, that he may appear to be a faithful Mediator; he will deliver up his kingdom, not to be divested of his power, but to give a proof that his work is finish'd, that not one enemy is left unsubdued, and that not one soul committed to his care is lost. Tho' he will thus deliver up his kingdom as to the form of administering it, yet his kingdom will be everlasting; he will sit down as a glorious victor, when all his enemies are brought under; he now reigns as one conquering, but then he will reign as one who has actually triumph'd over all his enemies; then there will be an open declaration of his voluntary submission to the Father, in his medi-

^o 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.

^q I beg leave to transfer hither, it being its proper place, what I have formerly said on this text; (True Script. Doct. of the Trin. p. 409, 410) See also Bp. Pearson on the Creed, p. 284, and Mr. Hurrión's very judicious explication and vindication of it, Sermon 2. on Christ's sitting at God's right-hand, p. 196—206.

^r Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14. Luke i. 33. 1 Tim. i. 17. Rev. xi. 15.

atorial capacity; and then God will be all in all, because he will communicate himself to the blessed inhabitants of the regions of light, without external means.

It would be most irrational to allow, that when Christ has fully accomplished his designs of mercy and goodness, to bring about which he laid down his life, that he should be strip'd of one great part of the reward of his sufferings, which is universal dominion; this would be to suppose him punish'd instead of rewarded: He will sit King for ever and ever; and all whom he has conducted safe within the heavenly gates, shall reign with him in life and glory for ever, beholding his face in righteousness, and satisfied, to all eternity, with the joys which are in his presence.

The APPLICATION.

There is no nation under the heavens, but what has produced proofs that God makes strange and amazing alterations in the kingdoms of this world, changing governments as he pleases. We in this island have seen as much of this nature as any people, and for the proof of it we need not look farther than the Reformation. Before that time we, as well as our neighbours, were overspread with Popish darkness, and the abomination that makes desolate was set up among us. Our fathers indeed, as became English spirits, made bolder and braver oppositions to the papal usurpations, than any other European nation; but by reason of our long civil wars, some of our princes were forced to crouch to the see of Rome, more than it can be thought they would, had their hands been free; so that we were reduced almost to as great thralldom as those round us. At last it pleased God to raise up a resolute and haughty prince, who as much out of hu-

Henry VIII.

mour

inbour as principle, at once threw out the papal tyranny, making it high-treason to own the Pope's supremacy, and severely putting this law in execution, on^f such as broke it. He bravely demolished the pretended religious houses, those seats of laziness, dens of uncleanness, and nurseries of superstition and rebellion; and his severe implacable temper terrified the ecclesiastics from raising seditions against him: Sometimes he persecuted the reformed, and at other times favour'd them, so that in the main the reformation gain'd great strength in his reign. His^t son, who reached but to the age of sixteen, was as great a prodigy for piety, strong^u sense, and learning, as ever appear'd of his years; under him the work of God went on prosperously, the royal youth himself having it at heart. When this wonder of nature and grace was snatch'd away, the throne was filled by a^w persecuting fury, who shed the blood of a great number of faithful witnesses for Christ; and who was so far from manifesting any thing of the softness peculiar to her sex, that she shewed her tender mercies to be cruelty. She again introduced the abominations of Popery, and had she dared, would have brought matters to the pass they were at before her father's time; but she began at last to meet with great opposition, which hinder'd her from making us so compleatly miserable as she desired. When the cry of the souls under the altar for vengeance on her, for shedding their blood, prevail'd to have her call'd hence, to receive her just doom, the government was put into the hand of a^x princess of a great soul, who again packed off the Romish trumpery, and reduced us to the state

^f Witness Bp Fisher, and that ingenious bigot Sir Tho. More.

^t King Edward the VI.

^u Of this any one will be convinced, who has viewed his remains in the king's library, most of which are published, tho' imperfectly, being hastily transcribed by Bp. Burnet, at the end of his history of the Reformation.

^w Q. Mary.

^x Q. Elizabeth.

we were in, in her brother's time; by her arms the power of Spain was humbled, under her the English nation made a noble figure; by her countenance the reformation was settled in Scotland; and by her aid the Protestant religion and civil liberty were established in the United Provinces; and they were made one of the bulwarks of the reformation. Afterwards the English honour was sunk, under a series of inglorious reigns; and a race of misled unhappy princes seemed to aim at making themselves little, and their kingdoms miserable; their main drift was secretly to introduce Popery: The last of them indeed pull'd off the mask, and being guided by a furious queen, and a few hot-brain'd priests, took the most violent methods to bring in the Romish religion: Whilst the wiser Papists were ashamed of his folly, rightly conjecturing that he would ruin their cause by his heat and precipitancy. When our liberties were trampled upon with the utmost insolence, and our reformed religion was in the greatest danger, it pleased God to raise up a brave and an honest hero for our rescue; who

Every honest, true-hearted Englishman, cannot but be filled with indignation at the impotent attempt made to blast the great King William's memory, by a late writer, whom he had raised from the dunghil, and had advanced to sit among princes. He tells us, (*Hist. of his own Times*, p. 690.) that the prince of Orange had no vice but of one sort, in which he was very cautious and secret; had this been true, he should have told what it was; for by this means he has exposed him to be charged by every vice, that the fancies of men can invent; and accordingly when this doughty history came first out, many crimes were fix'd upon: But there is just reason to think it a calumny, because he just before had fix'd a known slander upon the prince, (p. 689.) that he hated business of all sorts; that he hated the impertinence that too much attends business might be true, but his whole life, which was spent in publick cares, is a full confutation of this vile imputation. It had been much more advantageous to the memory of this vain-glorious writer, had he let the character of this wonderful man stand, as he had drawn it justly, in his *Travels*, p. 316—328.

was descended of a patriot race², and had in an amazing manner recovered his own country, to the lasting shame of the cowardly, tho' sly tyrant who had over-run it. When he came to attempt the recovery of our liberties, it pleased the most High to cause all opposition to fall before him; so that the haughty oppressor, who set up absolute power, was abandon'd by all, and forced to fly in the most ignominious manner, and as a fugitive to seek shelter in a strange land. Afterwards the arms of our deliverer were blessed, for the freeing the neighbouring island from a worse yoke, than our enemies had time to fix upon us. Tho' the nation was so indebted to the great instrument God had made use of to free it, and tho' he was as disinterested and a faithful a prince, as any that ever had the reins of government put into their hands, yet he was basely and dishonourably treated by an ungrateful generation; however he was continued as a great blessing to us, 'till he had established the Protestant succession; and as the true father of his people, had left that to them, as a valuable legacy. When this our dying hero's last legacy was in danger, God was pleased to interpose, and to settle the late king peaceably among us: The resistance which was afterwards made to him came to nothing, and he left

² He was the great grandson of the noble hero William, P. of Orange, who founded the Dutch commonwealth, and who died a martyr for liberty, being basely assassinated by the vile treachery of Philip II. king of Spain.

³ There cannot be a greater and juster panegyric formed for any one, than the following lines, which were wrote on K. William by an honest statesman.

His toils for no ignoble end design'd,
 Promote the common welfare of mankind;
 No wild ambition moves, but Europe's fears,
 The cries of orphans, and the widows tears;
 Oppress'd religion gives the first alarms,
 And injur'd justice sets him in his arms;
 His conquests freedom to the world afford,
 And nations bless the labours of his sword.

M. Secretary Addison, in his works, Vol. I. p. 12.
 the

the quiet possession of his crown to his present majesty, under whose protection we are so happy, as to enjoy our civil rights, and the liberty of worshipping God, according to the dictates of our own consciences.

When we look back on the various dealings of our God with us, we may sing of mercy and of judgment; of mercy, because we are still continued a free nation, and enjoy the inestimable blessing of the Protestant religion; and of judgment, because we have made so little good improvement of the favours, which the most High has been pleased to shower down upon us. As a more unworthy people never were the objects of mercy, so kindnesses bestow'd without desert were never more abused, than they have been in our unthankful nation, the inhabitants of which act, as if they thought they were deliver'd from popery and slavery, that they may be at liberty to commit all manner of abominations. Atheistical principles are now by many avowed; the innocence of error is asserted; the distinction of right and wrong is pretended to be independent of God, which is setting up some law superior to the most High; it is pleaded that virtue takes its rise from pride and singularity, and that private vices, tho' ever so enormous, are publick benefits: Deism rides in triumph, and is supported by many, who would be ready to assault any one who should call them Deists; when yet they stupidly drudge for the enemies of revelation, by making a chartering for what they call natural religion, which they deck with plumes stole from revelation, and present it to our view in a borrowed garb, in which (it must be own'd) it makes a better figure, than it does in the writings of the heathens, tho' they were men of stronger sense than these impostors, who steal their best colours from the scripture, at the same time that they despise it: The religion of Christ and his miracles were never treated with
such

such brutish insolence, and such stupid spite as they have been of late: The most daring invasions have been made on the most weighty reveal'd truths, endeavours have been used to rob Christ of the glory of his supreme Deity, his satisfaction has been exploded, and his righteousness spurn'd at; the operations of the Spirit have been banter'd and decry'd, and the power of man to convert himself has been eagerly advanced: Some have made the doctrine of grace the subject of their derision and haughty scorn, and others have abused it, to the despising the means of salvation, entertaining mean thoughts of the law, and harbouring flight apprehensions of sin: All zeal for truth is run down by the patrons of lukewarmness as intemperate heat; heats and animosities prevail, and gospel love is in a manner lost, especially among those treacherous betrayers of Christianity, who bellow for charity, and under the plausible mask of moderation, do more for the cause of irreligion, than infidels could themselves do. As religious principles are in a great measure lost, so morality is at the lowest ebb: Unnatural lust, fornication, drunkenness, swearing, lying, and cheating were never at such a height in any civilized nation, as they have been since some have fancied they have seen the approach of Christ's kingdom, tho' in reality they have seen nothing. Among all denominations of Christians, practical religion is under decays, and little care is taken, by such as profess Christianity, to adorn the gospel of their God and Saviour, by a holy life and conversation.

This is but a small and imperfect sketch of the odious portrait which might be drawn, of the state of religion in our land. If we look out carefully, a very disagreeable scene cannot but open itself to our impartial view; and when we think how matters stand, our hearts cannot but tremble for the ark of God; however, if we consider, that Christ (an all-wise and almighty King) has the government

vernment upon his shoulder, we should not be cast down out of measure, but should hope that he will revive his work, and will never suffer his own interest to sink. We ought to think on our ways, to consider from whence we have fallen, and repent, and then we may hope he will not remove our candlestick out of its place. At the same time that we are thankful to Christ, because he, the Lord our God, has afforded us any small measure of favour, given us a nail in his holy place, and vouchsafed us deliverance, punishing us less than our iniquities deserve, we should offer up our prayers, with strong cries, to our exalted Redeemer, that he would be pleased to revive his work in the midst of our days, and that he would send his Spirit down upon us, as a refreshing dew: Then, however barren and unfruitful we now are, our wilderness and solitary places will be glad, our desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose; we shall revive as the corn, we shall grow as the lily, we shall be fruitful as the vine; our beauty will be as the olive-tree, and we shall for our deep roots, and our towering height, be like the cedars. As we are under the view, and in the hands of a gracious King, we should compass his altar, and besiege his throne with our earnest entreaties, that he would scatter the clouds of error, which so much overspread us, and that he would stop the furious march of profaneness; and on the contrary, that he would, of his infinite mercy, be pleased to make the light of truth break forth with a genuine brightness, and cause righteousness to run down our streets as a river, and holiness to glide as a peaceful stream: Were he pleased to do this, glory might justly be said to dwell in our land, and we should not need to question, but that upon all this glory there would be a sure defence.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

